



Homicides in Oakland©

**2007 Homicide Report:
An Analysis of Homicides in Oakland from
January through December, 2007**

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Table of Contents

Introduction.....	1
A Near-Record Year in Homicides.....	1
Youth Homicide Decrease	1
I. Most Common Characteristics of Homicides.....	2
Table 1a: Most Common Characteristics of Homicides in Oakland for 2007 and the Five-Year Average	2
II. Total Number of Homicides.....	3
Table 2a: Total Homicides in Oakland 2007, 2006, Five-Year Average	3
III. Gender of Victims and Suspects	3
Table 3a: Oakland Homicides by Victim’s Gender 2007, 2006, Five-Year Average	3
Table 3b: Oakland Homicides by Suspect’s Gender 2007, 2006, Five-Year Average.....	3
IV. Race of Victims and Suspects.....	4
Table 4a: Oakland Homicides by Victim’s Race 2007, 2006, Five-Year Average.....	4
Figure 4a: Oakland Homicides by Victim’s Race 2007, 2006, Five-Year Average.....	4
Table 4b: Oakland Homicides by Suspect’s Race 2007, 2006, Five-Year Average	5
V. Age of Victims	5
Table 5a: Oakland Homicides by Age of Victim 2007, 2006, Five-Year Average.....	5
Figure 5a: Oakland Homicides by Age of Victim 2007, 2006, Five-Year Average	6
VI. Parole and Probation Status of Victims.....	6
Table 6a: Oakland Homicides by Parole/ Probation Status of Victims 2007, 2006, Five-Year Average	6
VII. Month of Incident.....	7
Table 7a: Oakland Homicides by Month of Incident 2007, 2006, Five-Year Average.....	7
VIII. Time of Day When Incident Occurred.....	8
Table 8a: Oakland Homicides by Time of Day Incident Occurred 2007	8
IX. Homicide Circumstances	8
X. Police Service Area (PSA) Where Incidents Occurred.....	11
Table 10a: Oakland Homicides by PSA where Incident Occurred 2007, 2006, Five-Year Average	11
Figure 10a: Oakland Homicides by PSA where Incident Occurred 2007, 2006, Five-Year Average	11
Figure 10b: Map of Oakland Homicides by Police Service Area (PSA) 2007.....	12
Figure 10c: Map of Oakland Homicides by Police Service Area (PSA) for 2006 and 2007 ...	13
XI. City Council District Where Incident Occurred	14
Table 11a: Oakland Homicides by City Council District where Incident Occurred 2007, 2006, 5-Year Average.....	14
Figure 11a: Oakland Homicides by City Council District where Incident Occurred 2007, 2006, 5-Year Average.....	15
Figure 11b: Map of Oakland Homicides by City Council District, 2007	16
Figure 11c: Map of Oakland Homicides by City Council District, 2006-2007.....	17
Figure 11d: Map of Oakland Homicide Rates by City Council District for 2007.....	18
Sources.....	19

Introduction

In past years Urban Strategies Council has produced quarterly or biannual reports on homicides in Oakland using detailed data provided by the Oakland Police Department's Homicide Section. Due to staffing shortages, the Oakland police Department is no longer able to provide this detailed data to the Council. As a result the 2007 Homicide Report uses data gleaned from public sources and some aggregated tables from the OPD's official report. From these data we have created this report on the characteristics of the 127 homicides that occurred in Oakland from January 1 through December 31, 2007. This report presents annual data from 2007 and shows how characteristics of homicides in Oakland changed from 2006 to 2007 and how 2007 homicides compare with the five-year averages from 2003-2007.

This report summarizes available information such as victim demographic characteristics (suspect details are less complete and less precise), locations and times of the incidents. Comparing 2007 data to a five-year average of homicides helps to provide a context for understanding whether there are emerging patterns that differ substantially from the patterns in prior years.

This year sees the inclusion of some additional types of data relating to the nature of the homicides taking place in Oakland such as premises and types of weapons involved.

A Near-Record Year in Homicides

The 127 homicides in 2007 represent a 14.2% decrease over the 148 homicides that occurred in 2006. This represents an increase of 11.4% in the number of homicides compared to the five-year average of 114. The ten year average is 101 homicides per year. The 2007 total of 127 ranks it the 10th highest total in homicides over the past 23 years.

Youth Homicide Decrease

The most noticeable trend in the 2007 data for Oakland is the dramatic decrease in homicide victims under the age of 18 years. Eleven youth were killed in Oakland in 2007 compared to twenty in 2006 and just under ten youth per year for the previous five years. This represents almost half as many youth being killed as in 2006. While this is a positive change, ten youth losing their lives to violence in any year in this city is a burden too great to bear and a tragedy that must not continue.

I. Most Common Characteristics of Homicides

Table 1a summarizes the most common characteristics of Oakland homicides in 2007 compared to homicides in Oakland over the past five years.

- On average, there were 114 homicides in Oakland over the five-year period of 2003-2007.
- In both 2007 and during the previous five-year period, over 86% of homicide victims were male.
- Over the past five years, African Americans accounted for 70.2% of homicide victims; for 2007, they accounted for 71.7%.
- In 2007 over 36% of homicides occurred between the hours of 8:00 PM and 11:59 PM.
- In 2007 eight out of ten homicides involved firearms.
- In 2007 three out of four homicides occurred on a public street (73%).
- In 2007 and over the past five years, homicides were most likely to occur in Police Service Area 5 which accounted for over 24% of all homicides.

Table 1a: Most Common Characteristics of Homicides in Oakland for 2007 and the Five-Year Average

	Most Common Characteristics 2007	Percent of Known Total	Most Common Characteristics 5-Year Average	Percent of Known Total
Victim				
Gender	Male	88.2	Male	86.8
Race	African American	71.7	African American	70.2
Age (Years)	18 to 24 & 25 to 34 Years	31.5	18 to 24 Years	31.2
Parole/Probation Status	Neither	58.1	Neither	58.6
Suspect				
Gender	Male		Male	
Race	African American		African American	
Time, Location, Method				
Month	August	14.2	September	12.6
Time of Day	8:00 PM-11:59 PM	36.2		
Weapon/Means	Firearm	79	N/A	N/A
Location	Street	73	N/A	N/A
Police Service Area (PSA)	5	24.4	5	25.1
Total Homicides	127		114	

II. Total Number of Homicides

- There were 127 homicides in Oakland in 2007, exceeding the average of 114 homicides in the years from 2003-2007 but significantly lower than 2006 of 148 homicides.

Table 2a: Total Homicides in Oakland 2007, 2006, Five-Year Average

Total Homicides	2007	2006	5 Year Average
	127	148	114

III. Gender of Victims and Suspects

- In 2007, 88% of homicide victims were male. In each year from 2003 through 2007 the majority of homicide victims were also male.

Table 3a: Oakland Homicides by Victim's Gender 2007, 2006, Five-Year Average

Gender of Victim	2007		2006		5 Year	
	Count	Percent of Total	Count	Percent of Total	Average	Percent of Total
Male	112	88.2	125	84.5	99	86.8
Female	15	11.8	22	14.9	14.8	13.0
Unknown	0	0.0	1	0.7	0.2	0.2
Total	127	100.0	148	100.0	114	100.0

Table 3b: Oakland Homicides by Suspect's Gender 2007, 2006, Five-Year Average

Gender of Suspect	2007		2006		5 Year	
	Count	Percent of Total	Count	Percent of Total	Average	Percent of Total
Male	46	36.2	59	39.9	63.6	55.8
Female	1	0.8	1	0.7	2.6	2.3
Unknown	80	63.0	88	59.5	47.8	41.9
Total	127	100.0	148	100.0	114	100.0

IV. Race of Victims and Suspects

- In 2007 72% of homicide victims were African-Americans compared to a five-year average of 70%.
- The percentage of Hispanic victims in 2007 (20.5%) was identical to the five-year average.
- Over 60% of cases have no identified suspect with race information available; of those known suspects 82% are African American.

Table 4a: Oakland Homicides by Victim's Race 2007, 2006, Five-Year Average

Race of Victim	2007		2006		5 Year	
	Count	Percent of Total	Count	Percent of Total	Average	Percent of Total
African American	91	71.7	98	66.2	80	70.2
Hispanic	26	20.5	32	21.6	23.4	20.5
White	6	4.7	6	4.1	4.4	3.9
Asian	1	0.8	5	3.4	3.2	2.8
Unknown	3	2.4	7	4.7	3	2.6
Total	127	100.0	148	100.0	114	100.0

Figure 4a: Oakland Homicides by Victim's Race 2007, 2006, Five-Year Average

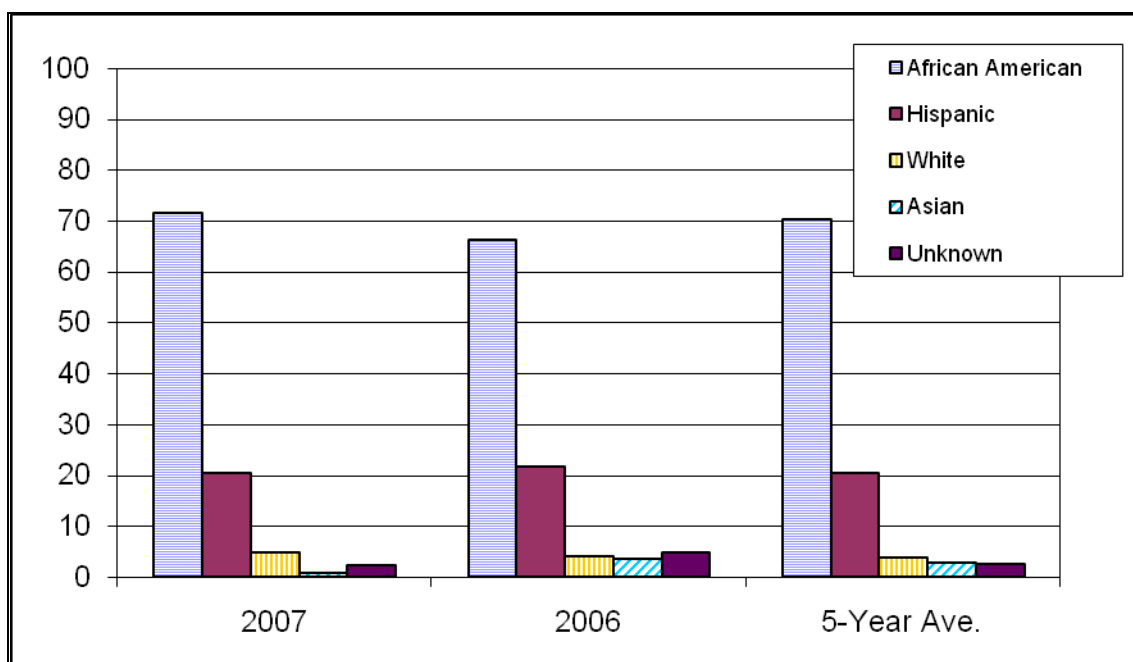


Table 4b: Oakland Homicides by Suspect's Race 2007, 2006, Five-Year Average

Race of Suspect	2007		2006		5 Year	
	Count	Percent of Total	Count	Percent of Total	Average	Percent of Total
African American	39	30.7	39	26.4	50.8	44.6
Hispanic	5	3.9	16	10.8	11.2	9.8
White	2	1.6	2	1.4	1	0.9
Asian	0	0.0	1	0.7	1.8	1.6
Unknown	81	63.8	90	60.8	49.2	43.2
Total	127	100.0	148	100.0	114	100.0

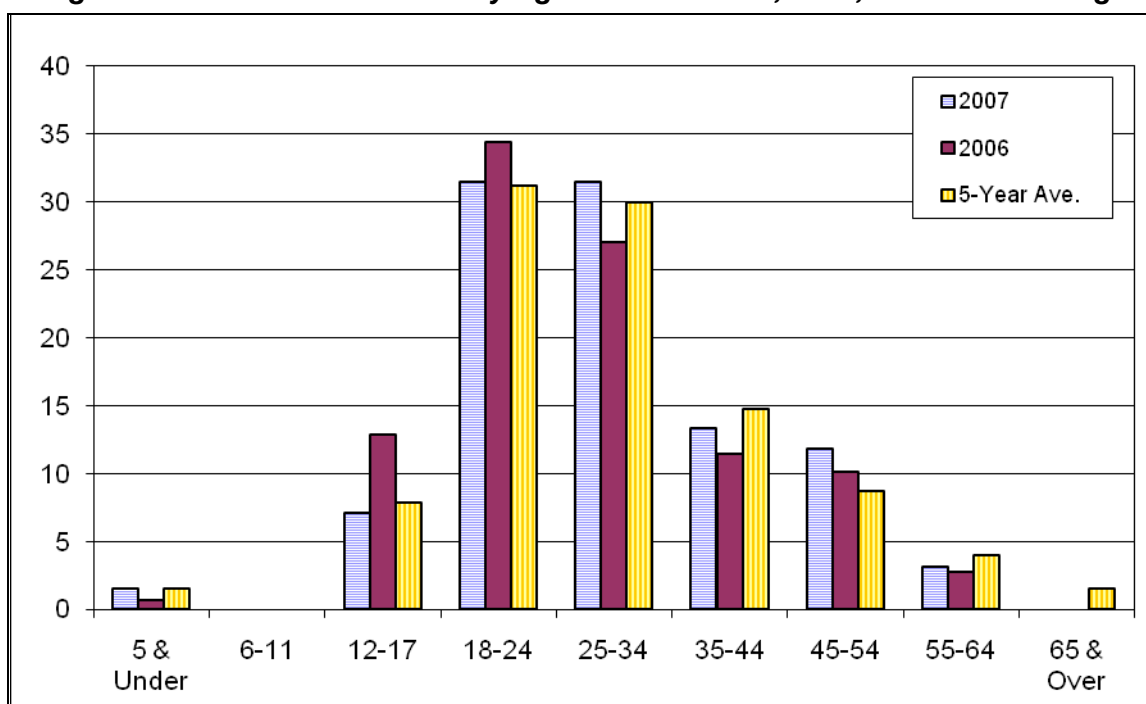
V. Age of Victims

- In 2007, 63% of victims were between the ages of 18 and 34 which closely matches the five-year average of 61.2%.
- In 2007, 11 victims, or 9% of all victims, were under 18 years old, slightly under the five-year average of 9.5%.
- The 2007 age breakdowns closely matched the five-year averages overall.

Table 5a: Oakland Homicides by Age of Victim 2007, 2006, Five-Year Average

Age of Victim	2007		2006		5 Year	
	Count	Percent of Total	Count	Percent of Total	Average	Percent of Total
5 Years and Under	2	1.6	1	0.7	1.8	1.6
6 to 11 Years	0	0.0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
12 to 17 Years	9	7.1	19	12.8	9.0	7.9
18 to 24 Years	40	31.5	51	34.5	35.6	31.2
25 to 34 Years	40	31.5	40	27.0	34.2	30.0
35 to 44 Years	17	13.4	17	11.5	16.8	14.7
45 to 54 Years	15	11.8	15	10.1	10.0	8.8
55 to 64 Years	4	3.1	4	2.7	4.6	4.0
65 and Over	0	0.0	0	0.0	1.8	1.6
Unknown	0	0.0	1	0.7	0.3	0.2
Total	127	100.0	148	100.0	114	100.0

Figure 5a: Oakland Homicides by Age of Victim 2007, 2006, Five-Year Average



VI. Parole and Probation Status of Victims

- In 2007, 2006 and over the five-year period, more than half of all homicide victims were on neither parole nor probation.
- While 62% of cases have no data on suspect's status, of those identified, only about 16% were on probation or parole.

Table 6a: Oakland Homicides by Parole/ Probation Status of Victims 2007, 2006, Five-Year Average

Parole/Probation Status of Victim	2007		2006		5 Year	
	Count	Percent of Total	Count	Percent of Total	Average	Percent of Total
Neither	73	58.1	57	60.6	66.8	58.6
Either Parole/Probation	51	40.2	62	41.9	45.8	40.2
Parole Only	20	15.7	17	11.5	13.0	11.4
Probation Only	31	24.4	38	25.7	29.4	25.8
Both	0	0.0	7	4.7	3.4	3.0
Unknown	3	2.4	0	0.0	1.4	1.2
Total	127	100.0	148	100.0	114	100.0

Table 6b: Oakland Homicides by Parole/Probation Status of Suspects 2007, 2006, Five-Year

Parole/Probation Status of Suspect	2007		2006		5 Year	
	Count	Percent of Total	Count	Percent of Total	Average	Percent of Total
Neither	28	22.0	20	13.5	24	21.1
Either						
Parole/Probation	20	15.7	15	10.1	21	18.4
Parole Only	7	5.5	4	2.7	8.2	7.2
Probation Only	13	10.2	8	5.4	11.2	9.8
Both	N/A		3	2.0	2	1.8
Unknown	79	62.2	113	76.4	69	60.5
Total	127	100.0	148	100.0	114	100.0

VII. Month of Incident

- In 2007, the highest number of homicides, 18, occurred in the month of August (14.2%), followed by June (13.4%) and September (12.6%). This general pattern of high numbers of homicides in late summer and early fall also appears in the five-year averages.

Table 7a: Oakland Homicides by Month of Incident 2007, 2006, Five-Year Average

Month of Incident	2007		2006		5 Year	
	Count	Percent of Total	Count	Percent of Total	Average	Percent of Total
January	10	7.9	10	6.8	8.4	7.4
February	4	2.7	9	9.0	6.6	2
March	8	6.3	16	10.8	9.8	8.6
April	8	6.3	11	7.4	8.4	7.4
May	11	8.7	10	6.8	8.6	7.5
June	17	13.4	11	7.4	10.2	8.9
July	14	11.0	15	10.1	10.8	9.5
August	18	14.2	16	10.8	13	11.4
September	16	12.6	19	12.8	14.4	12.6
October	3	2.4	9	6.1	6.4	5.6
November	4	3.1	14	9.5	7.4	6.5
December	14	11.0	8	5.4	10	8.8
Total	127	100.0	148	100.0	114	100.0

VIII. Time of Day When Incident Occurred

- The deadliest time of the day in Oakland in 2007 was between 8:00PM and 11:59PM with 36.2% of homicides occurring in that timeframe, followed closely by the four hours from 12:00AM to 3:59AM with 26.8%.

Table 8a: Oakland Homicides by Time of Day Incident Occurred 2007

5 Year	2007	
Time of Incident	Count	Percent of Total
12:00 AM - 3:59 AM	34	26.8
4:00 AM - 7:59 AM	10	7.9
8:00 AM - 11:59 AM	8	6.3
12:00 PM - 3:59 PM	8	6.3
4:00 PM - 7:59 PM	21	16.5
8:00 PM - 11:59 PM	46	36.2
Total	127	100.0

IX. Homicide Circumstances

- The vast majority of homicides occurred on a public street (73%) while another 16% occurred in private residences.

Table 9a: Oakland Homicides Circumstances – Location

Premises	Count	Percent of Total
Residence	20	16%
IFO/IRO Residence	0	0%
Business	7	6%
Bar/Club	0	0%
Street/Sidewalk	93	73%
Parking Lot/Lot	2	1%
Secluded Area	0	0%
Other	5	4%
Total	127	100%

- In 2007, seven out of ten homicides were carried out with a handgun while firearms were responsible for 79% of all homicides.

Table 9b: Oakland Homicides Circumstances – Weapon or Means

Weapon/Mean	Count	%
Handgun	89	70%
Rifle	1	1%
Assault Rifle	6	5%
Shotgun	4	3%
Drug/Poison	0	0%
Blunt Trauma	4	3%
Strangulation/Drowning	1	1%
Suffocation/Fire	0	0%
Vehicle	1	1%
Stabbing/Cutting Weapon	12	9%
Bludgeoning	1	1%
Unknown	8	6%
Total	127	100%

- The exact nature of the circumstances surrounding each homicide is known in just over half the cases in 2007.
- Robbery is the most common classification (12%) and arguments are the second most frequent incident leading to a homicide (11%). Domestic cases account for 5% of 2007 homicides and gang activity is linked to just 6% of cases. Retaliation accounted for at least 6 of last year's murders.

Table 9c: Oakland Homicides Circumstances – Official Classification

Motive	Count	Percent	Motive	Count	Percent
Robbery	15	12%	Child Abuse	1	1%
Burglary	1	1%	Argument	14	11%
Drug Related	9	7%	Subgroup of Argument		
<i>Subgroup of Drug Related</i>			Stranger	2	
Robbery	2		Acquaintance	4	
Debt	4		Unknown	5	
Turf	2		Domestic	6	5%
Sales of Bunk	0		Subgroup of domestic		
Selling in wrong area	0		Husband/wife	2	
Drug informant	0		Boyfriend/girlfriend	2	
Theft of drugs/drug money	1		Same sex relationship	0	
Sex Offense	0	0%	Relative/relative	1	
Random	0	0%	Love triangle	1	
Gang	8	6%	Jealousy	0	
Accidental	0	0%	Minor/Adult Relationship	0	
Justified	5	4%	Financial Gain	1	1%
Retaliation/Revenge	6	5%	Murder for Hire	0	0%
Unknown	61	48%	Other	0	0%

X. Police Service Area (PSA) Where Incidents Occurred

- The highest number of homicides occurred in PSA 5 in 2007, with 31 cases (24.4%) and in 2006 with 39 cases (25%).
- In 2007, the second largest number of homicides occurred in PSA 6 with 29 reported homicides.
- Figure 10b presents a map of homicides by PSA for 2007.
- Figure 10c presents a comparison of the homicides in 2006 and 2007 by PSA.

Table 10a: Oakland Homicides by PSA where Incident Occurred 2007, 2006, Five-Year Average

PSA	2007		2006		5 Year	
	Count	Percent of Total	Count	Percent of Total	Average	Percent of Total
Metro	7	5.5	4	2.7	3.8	3.3
1	25	19.7	24	16.2	20.2	17.7
2	14	11.0	12	8.1	9.2	8.1
3	7	5.5	15	10.1	10.6	9.3
4	14	11.0	26	17.6	16.8	14.7
5	31	24.4	37	25.0	29	25.4
6	29	22.8	30	20.3	24.2	21.2
Total	127	100	148	100	114	100.0

Figure 10a: Oakland Homicides by PSA where Incident Occurred 2007, 2006, Five-Year Average

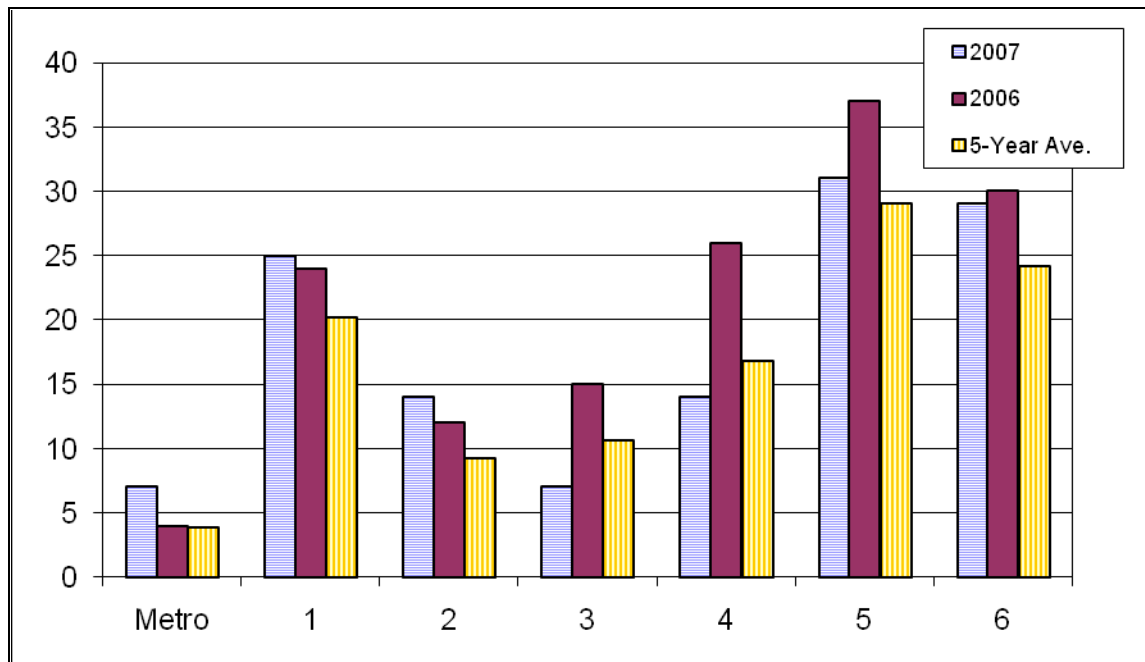


Figure 10b: Map of Oakland Homicides by Police Service Area (PSA) 2007

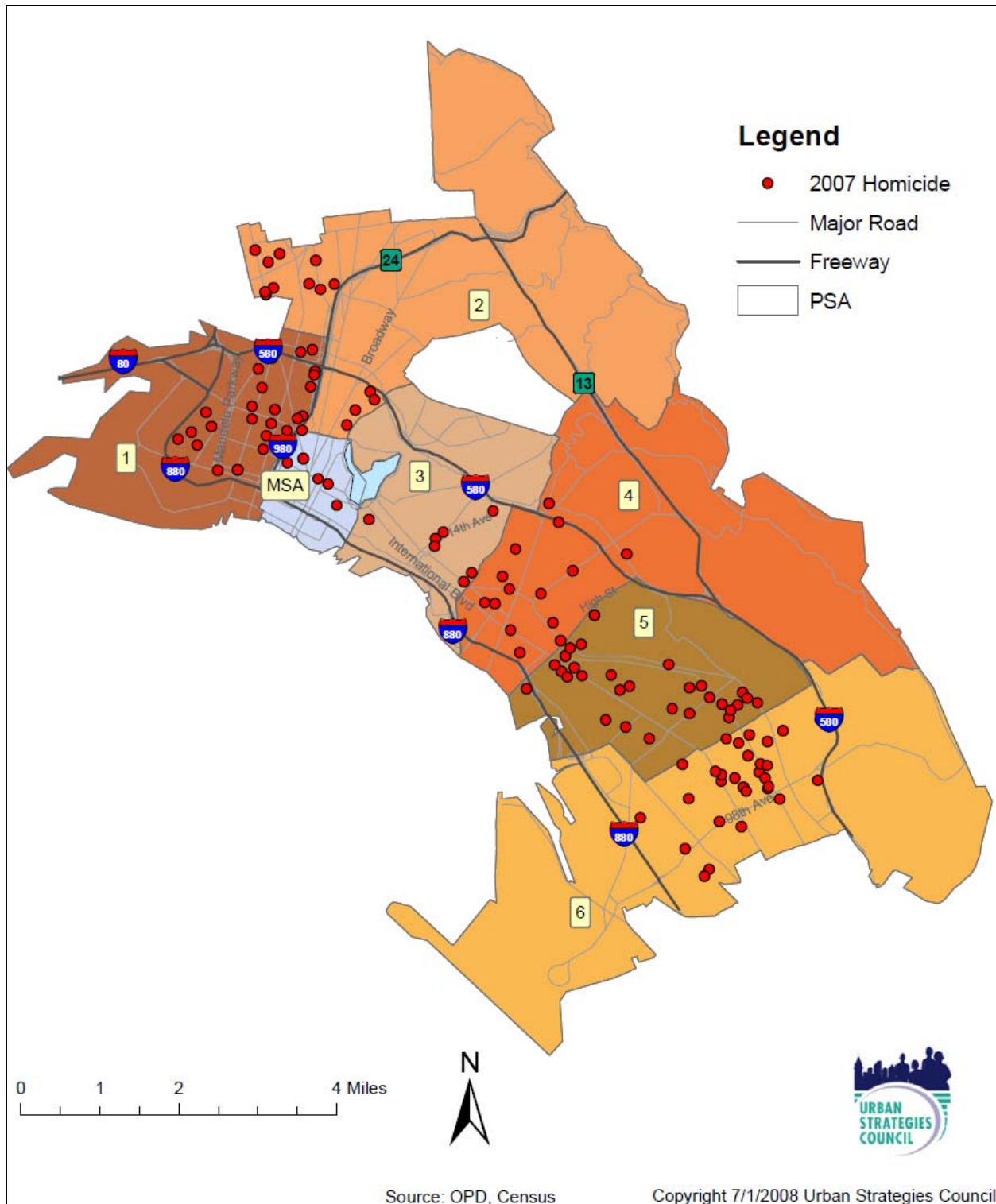
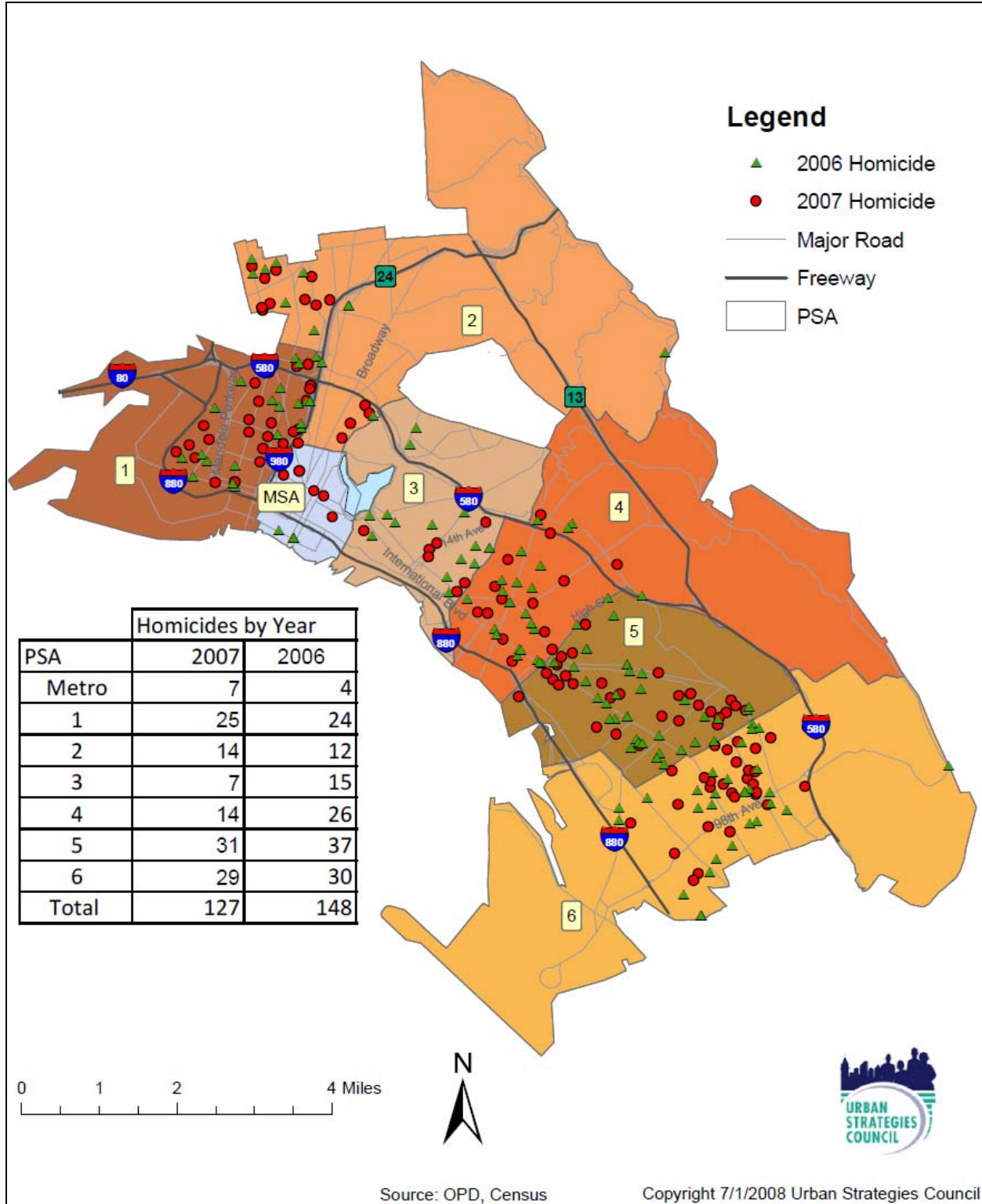


Figure 10c: Map of Oakland Homicides by Police Service Area (PSA) for 2006 and 2007



XI. City Council District Where Incident Occurred

- In 2007, the greatest number of homicides occurred in District 3 with 33 cases. District 3 saw a rise from 16.9% of the total homicides in 2006 to 26% in 2007- an increase of 8 more homicides.
- The percentage of homicides that occurred in District 7 decreased from 25% of the total in 2006 to 21.3% in 2007 which is below the five-year average of 24.4%.
- Figure 11b presents a map of homicides by City Council District for 2007.
- Figure 11c presents a map comparing homicides in 2006 and 2007 by Council District.
- Figure 11d presents a map of the rate of homicides in 2007 per 100,000 persons in each Council District.

Table 11a: Oakland Homicides by City Council District where Incident Occurred 2007, 2006, 5-Year Average

City Council District	2007		2006		5 Year	
	Count	Percent of Total	Count	Percent of Total	Average	Percent of Total
1	12	9.4	15	10.1	8.6	7.5
2	7	5.5	12	10.8	8.6	7.5
3	33	26.0	25	16.9	24.2	21.2
4	7	5.5	11	7.4	6.8	6.0
5	19	15.0	23	15.5	17.4	15.3
6	22	17.3	25	16.9	20.4	17.9
7	27	21.3	37	25.0	27.8	24.4
Unknown		0.0	0	0.0	0.3	0.2
Total	127	100.0	148	100.0	114.0	100.0

Figure 11a: Oakland Homicides by City Council District where Incident Occurred 2007, 2006, 5-Year Average

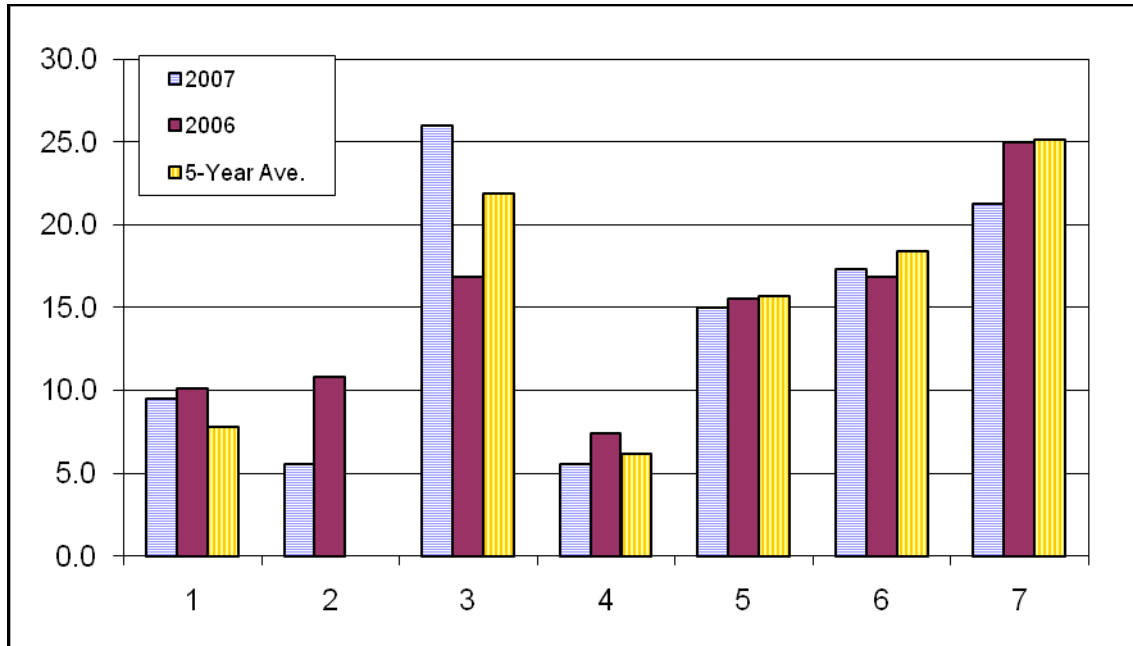


Figure 11b: Map of Oakland Homicides by City Council District, 2007

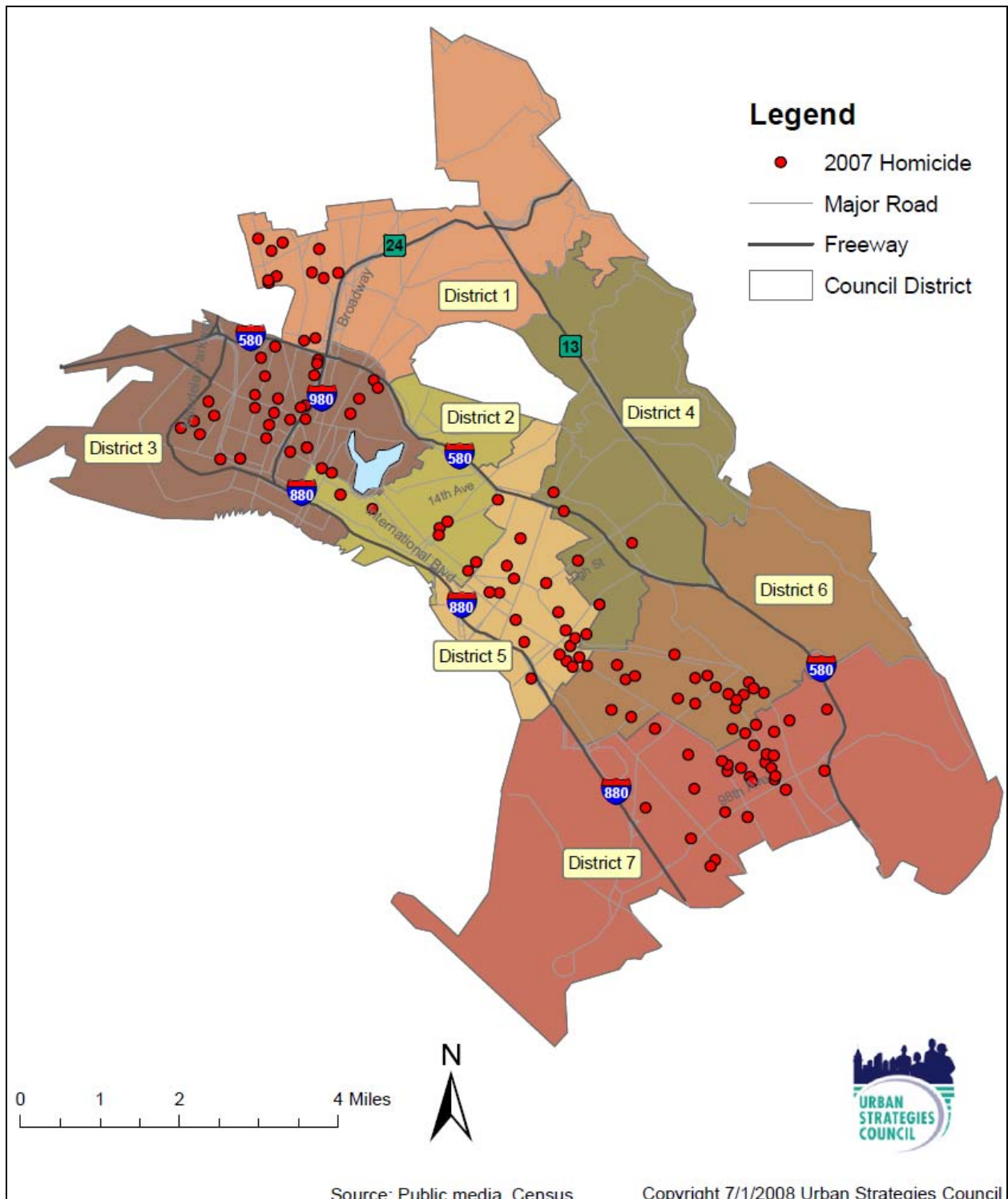


Figure 11c: Map of Oakland Homicides by City Council District, 2006-2007

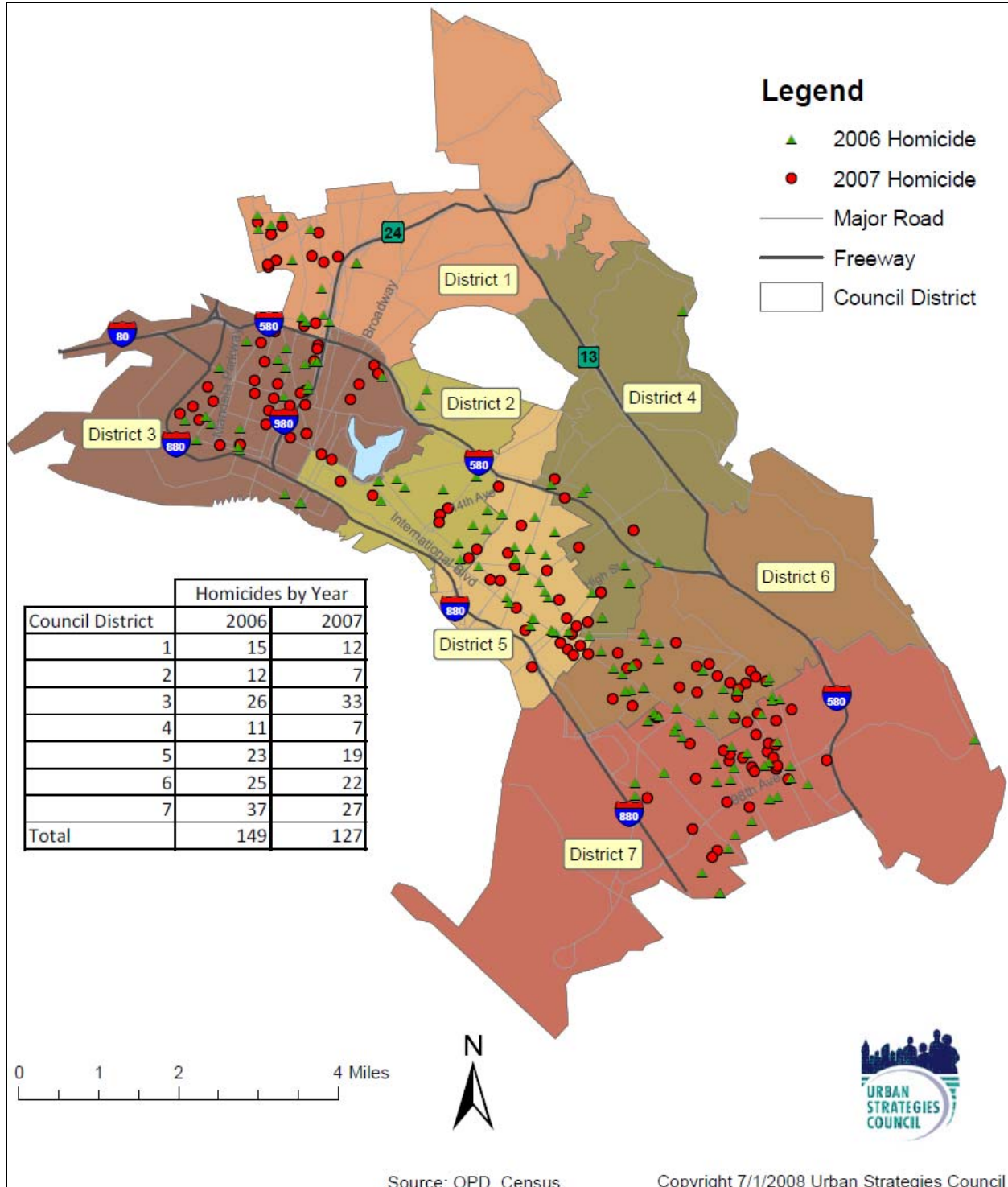
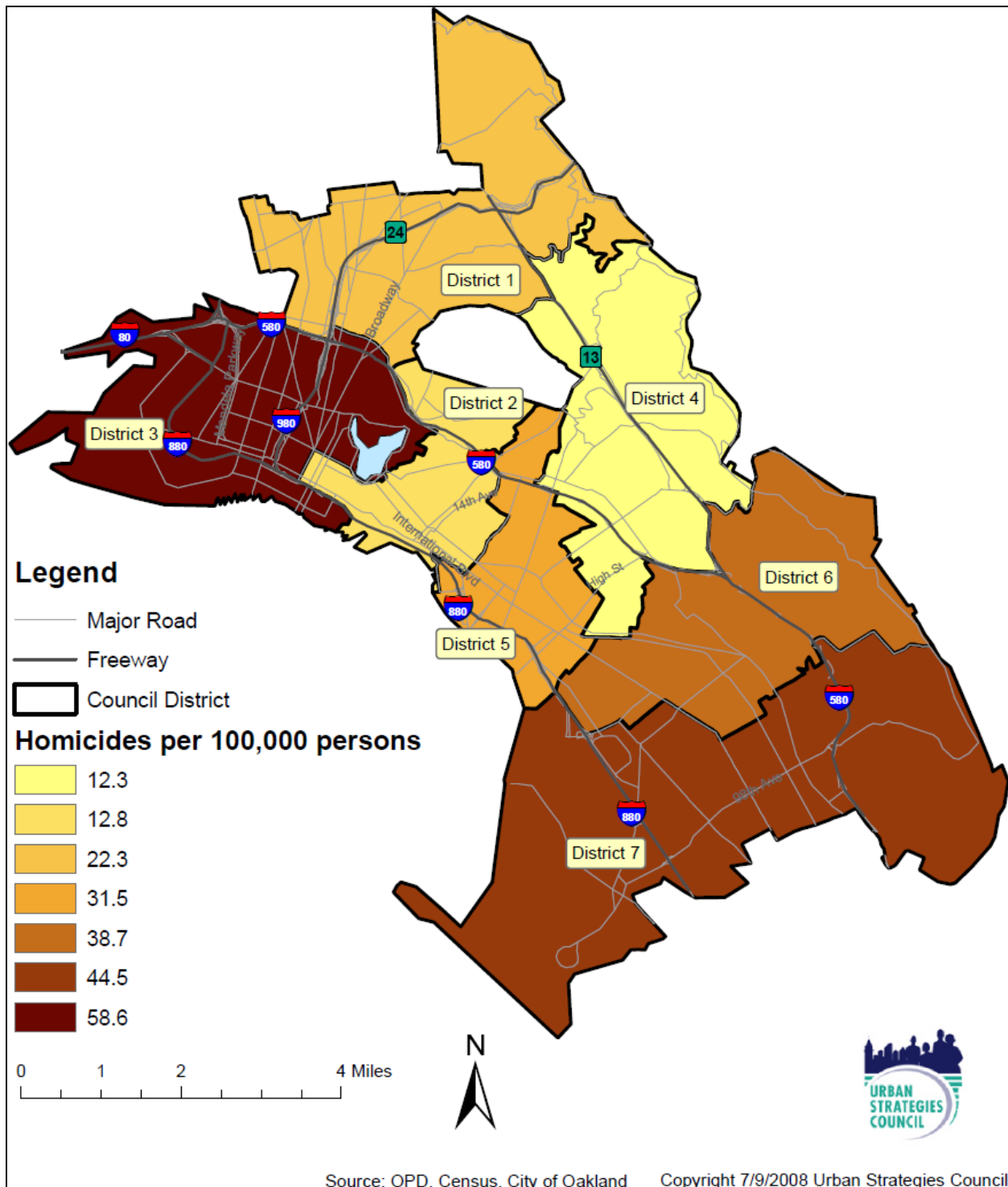


Figure 11d: Map of Oakland Homicide Rates by City Council District for 2007



Sources

Homicide data for 2003-2006 provided by the Homicide Division of the Oakland Police Department.

Homicide data for 2007 sourced from public media agencies and websites.

2007 Suspect data from official OPD report: Homicide Statistical Report December 2007 (year end)

Base map data provided by the City of Oakland Planning Department.